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religious thinking among the Romans and the migration of oriental cults from Asia and Egypt into the western half of the Roman Empire are briefly but satisfactorily described.

The two closing lectures sketch the early history of Christian thinking. Here the author practically transcribes in summarized form the opinions of Harnack as given in his *History of Dogma*. Jesus is said to have preached an ethical gospel hardly if at all colored by any strong interest in current Jewish apocalypticism. The next stage of Christian thinking is Paul's gospel of atonement, faith, and moral regeneration. A third stage is reached in the Gospel of John with its emphasis upon Christ's divine nature and the incarnation of the Logos. This is thought to mark the beginning of Greek influence upon Christianity, an influence which emerges more prominently in the apologists and the Alexandrians, culminating in Origen. No very marked influence from the mystery cults or from popular pagan religious ideas is discovered prior to the second century, when from this source asceticism and sacramental notions about baptism and the Lord's Supper are supposed to have come into Christianity. These, as will be perceived, are the familiar views of Harnack and his school. Perhaps if the scope of the volume had permitted critical discussion, Professor Moore would have told us why he passes so lightly over the views of the more recent *religionsgeschichtliche* school which has now come to occupy so prominent a place in our interpretation of the history of early Christianity.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF WANG YANG-MING

The interests and importance of the subject presented in this volume¹ cannot be overestimated when one considers how a system of thought so dynamic and original could have been evolved out of the Confucian classics after they had been interpreted and observed in formal and static ways for over two thousand years. To state the history of Confucianism during these centuries in brief, it had passed through various interpretations and applications, but most of them had been limited to formal interpretations, until the twelfth century, under the Sung dynasty, witnessed a significant upheaval of metaphysical and ethical thoughts, thanks to the more or less original geniuses of the philosophers

¹ *The Philosophy of Wang Yang-ming*. Translated from the Chinese by Frederick Goodrich Henke. Introduction by James H. Tufts. Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1916. xvii+512 pages. \$2.50.

Lu, Chou, the brothers Cheng, and Chu. Two distinct tendencies are represented by these philosophers. Lu Hsiang-shan held a dynamic and monistic view of the universe and human life, while the view of Chu Hui-an was static and dualistic. Now the philosopher Wang, the subject of this volume, who lived three hundred years after Lu, opposed the dualism and empiricism of Chu by emphasizing the unity of the universal reason and the individual intuition, or conscience. This was done partly by following in the footsteps of Lu and mainly by a strenuous mental struggle and drill of his own. He was not a mere thinker, but a soldier and statesman, who tried to embody his ideas and convictions in his life of difficult tasks and sad vicissitudes. He was an idealist, but a pragmatist, in a wider sense of the word.

Wang left almost nothing in the way of a systematic treatise on his philosophy, but his ideas and discourses were faithfully recorded by his friends and disciples. Besides these records, there is a considerable number of his letters and miscellaneous writings, not only on philosophy and ethics, but on statecraft, political economy, and military affairs. Thus, naturally, these documents are of various styles, ranging from the regular classical style to the colloquial of daily use, including even his conversation in written language with a dumb man. Taking these facts into account, one cannot but admire the painstaking labor and patience of Dr. Henke, the translator of Wang's philosophical writings and sayings as produced in this volume. His translation is very faithful to the original, though often too verbal and with occasional errors. He omits almost no word or phrase, and the reader can rely upon the translation as a whole as a reproduction of the original. Yet any reader should not be induced by the title of the book to think to get out of it a systematic or coherent view of Wang's philosophy, but be careful and persevering enough to pick up the philosopher's ideas out of a conglomerate of his sayings and writings.

This last point induces the reviewer to express his wish that the translator had given a fuller introduction to the philosophy, not only elucidating Wang's philosophical system as a whole, but pointing out its specific points, especially in contradistinction to Chu Hui-an. The translator's preface is too meager for this purpose, and his separate essay published in the *Monist* (1914) gives very little clue to the specific connotations of Wang's philosophic terms. One can imagine how obscure Marcus Aurelius would be if translated and introduced to readers who had no knowledge of Stoicism or of Roman life with only a few introductory remarks on Stoic teaching. The present translator has done a

similar performance, or one even less intelligible, reproducing Wang's technical terms, which are full of specific contentions on his part in opposition to his predecessors, as if they were common terms used among modern Western philosophers. Of course, a very keen-sighted reader could notice the specific bearings of Wang's terminology, as Professor Tufts has done more or less accurately in his introduction. Nevertheless, a good translation demands that the specific points of the original terminology be pointed out, by adding the original words in many cases and by explaining them in footnotes. But this has been done only very meagerly; for instance, the note on page 240 on the "intuitive faculty," the philosopher's cardinal doctrine, is inaccurate and misleading.

Two points are to be emphatically criticized in this connection: that the translations of most technical terms are too plain, i.e., too modern, and that most of them are more in accordance with Chu's connotations than with Wang's. These terms are too numerous to be fully listed in this connection; only a few important ones will be reviewed.

Liang-chih is the cardinal point in the whole system of Wang's philosophy and ethics, just like the *voûs* of the Stoics or the *ātman* in the Upanishads. It is the primeval creative principle of the universe as well as the prime mover of the human soul; and Wang emphasized the importance of realizing this fundamental force and intelligence in everyone's untainted conscience. No one can expect any word in English to convey adequately these implications; yet the "intuitive knowledge," "intuitive faculty of good," as rendered by the translator are too strictly psychological. (It may be added that the reviewer would propose "prime conscience," of course with explanatory remarks.)

As a corollary to the doctrine of *liang-chih*, the phrase *chih-chih* or *chih-liang-chih* means "to realize the *liang-chih*," "to bring the *liang-chih* to full light and efficiency" (both in thought and life), whereas the translator's renderings are: "to extend knowledge to the utmost," "to extend the use of intuitive knowledge of good to the utmost." These are contrary to Wang's contentions, that "knowledge of things" and "extending" it, as understood and emphasized by Chu Hui-an, are not only useless, but harmful, and that the real knowledge consists, not in extending the use of perception and reasoning, but in concentrating one's own mind (or soul, if you please) to the innermost depth of the "prime conscience," which is of course intuitive but in a very special sense. This is emphasized, for instance, in a passage on p. 212, of which the translation is very inadequate, because the translator has used the word "extending" for "to get to the bottom," "to fully realize," or "to evolve

out of the prime source." Moreover, the translation has obscured the issue between Wang and Chu by using the same "extending" for both philosophers. By the way, the translator's "good-evil mind" used in this passage is ambiguous, because it is the same word as "mind which is able to discriminate between right and wrong," as found in other passages (p. 232, etc.).

Similarly with the phrases "natural law," "moral law," "heaven-given principle" for *t'ien-li*; "passion-nature," "vital force," "feeling" for *ch'i*; "principles" for *li*; "nature" for *sing*; "investigation of things" for *ko-mu*; "path of duty" for *tao*, etc. In these the renderings are mostly in accordance with Chu's interpretations and often contrary to Wang's specific contentions. We cannot enter into these discussions, but one instance will suffice to show the translator's wavering. Compare p. 214 and p. 311, where Wang discusses the meaning of the word *ko* and the translator has failed to catch Wang's contention against Chu. Of course the difficulty here, as in many other passages, is that the two philosophers based their respective teachings and practices upon different interpretations of the same words and phrases found in the classics, and consequently a certain amount of ambiguity may be inevitable in reproducing those passages. Yet a clear discrimination is all the more necessary. At any rate, the translator has rendered those phrases more in the sense of Chu's interpretations than in Wang's, as we have remarked above. The result is that many of Wang's specific contentions are much obscured.

The missing of the philosopher's specific characteristics may be illustrated by another instance. The word *kung-fu*, originally derived from Buddhist "meditation," had a vital bearing on Wang's thought and life. It meant a methodical drill of mental attitude, spiritual exercise, so to speak, whether in quiet sitting or in active life. The translation is throughout simply "task" or "work," and in some passages the word is omitted. The inadequacy of these renderings is shown, for instance, on p. 55, ll. 2-3; p. 90, l. 1 from bottom; p. 105, ll. 10-12; p. 128, ll. 5-3 from bottom; p. 149, l. 7 from bottom; p. 186, l. 14 from bottom; p. 190, l. 3, etc. The reader may ponder on these passages and see whether Wang's special mental drill is represented.

Another defect of the translation is closely connected with the point cited above, that due heed has not been paid to the relation and reaction between Buddhism and the later Confucianists, including Chu and Wang. In fact, the upheaval of Confucian philosophy in the twelfth century was largely a result of Buddhist influence, a point which needs

a separate study. In spite of the opposition, in many points, of these Confucianists to Buddhism, their philosophic conceptions and terminology were largely borrowed from Buddhism. Not only the distinction and correlation between the metaphysical entity (*t'i*) and phenomenal manifestation (*yung*), between empirical knowledge and mystic intuition, but many phrases and conceptions concerning spiritual exercise and meditative life entered the Confucian arena from Buddhism. The philosopher Wang followed, in this respect, the footsteps of the Sung philosophers, especially of Lu Hsiang-shan, and some of the cardinal points of his metaphysics and spiritual exercise can hardly be grasped without referring to the Buddhist background of the system. How much the translator has oscillated in his understanding of Wang's thought on the metaphysical entity and phenomenal manifestations is shown in the variety, seemingly rather arbitrary, of his translations of these terms, where they are correlated or separately treated. "Structure," "natural disposition," "original nature," "nature," "original character," "beginning characteristics," "underlying substance," "original form"—these are words for *t'i*, the metaphysical entity; while *yung*, phenomenal manifestation, is rendered by "use," "functioning," "function," "manifestations" (pp. 53, 58, 59, 88, 91, 108, 121, 124, 154, 156, 167, 192, 206, 207, 211, 274, 300, 342, 344, etc.). Moreover, on p. 121 alone the phrase "natural condition" is used for either of the two conceptions (i.e., "natural condition and functioning" and "structure and natural condition" for the two terms), and on p. 274 the two are combined to "original function." This shows how the translator has missed a very important point in Wang's metaphysics, viz., that he accepted, together with the Sung philosophers, the Buddhist distinction between the entity and manifestation, and yet emphasized, as in the case of the Tien-tai school of Buddhist philosophy, the correlative unity of the two conceptions.

Similarly, the neglect, on the part of the translator, of the Hindu inheritance in Wang's philosophy is shown in the very imperfect rendering of those passages concerning the spiritual illumination in meditation. *Kung-fu* is one of the missed points. To cite some more: "The little intuitive knowledge" (p. 150), "the little intelligence and cleverness" (p. 169), "this small part of intuitive knowledge" (p. 178)—these are obscure and misleading, if not erroneous, renderings of Wang's statements of his mind, or better "prime conscience," bright and illuminated at the infinitesimal point, so to speak, which, however, is enough to illumine the cosmos. This point may best be illustrated by comparing it with the utterances of the Upanishads on the *ātman*, such as Chhan-

dogya (III, 14. 3). Can the translator's words convey this mysticism of Wang Yang-ming? Similarly, "seek better circumstances" (p. 110), "a thing to trifle with" (p. 200), "the thing that oversees the mind" (p. 243), "the mind which has regard for itself" (p. 244), "bring one's thought to one's notice" (p. 248)—these are either very faint or decidedly mistaken renderings of the phrases referring to the brightness of the spiritual illumination and perpetual illumination.

Or, again, can any reader imagine that the following two passages refer to one and the same original? They are: "Surely what you have said is of no immediate concern to me, for I have already made preparation for all sorts of imaginable circumstances" (p. 75); and "When all nature is exuberant in growth, it is also peaceful, calm, and free from any thought for itself" (p. 104). In fact the original refers to a Taoist-Buddhist sentence expressing that the ultimate reality is a "vacuity" (i.e., transcends all phenomenal distinctions), and yet contains in itself the source, or germs, of all manifestations.

Without citing more similar instances and minor mistakes, let us point out two of the most serious mistakes. On p. 128 a disciple's inquiry is stated thus: "Apprehensiveness is present as the result of one's ignorance." The real meaning is: apprehensiveness (to use the translator's word) and cautiousness are a method of mental drill to be adopted when one does not know just the point (of thought to be thought in meditation). The point has to do with the Buddhist method of *sati*, and Wang's contention was designed to impress upon his disciples that this state of mental drill ought to be directed toward the awakening of the "prime conscience," and not the suppression of all thought, as Wang understood Buddhism to insist on. The meaning of the passage is clear when parallel passages are referred to, as in pp. 147, 183, 243, 245, 260-61, 264, 369, 420, etc., where the translator offers us better renderings.

On p. 199 the translator has Wang say: "After I had been at Lung-ch'ang I did not discuss the meaning of the intuitive knowledge of good, for I was not able to interpret it." This astonishing translation almost nullifies Wang's life, effort, and deeds; because that day (in fact, at midnight) at Lung-ch'ang was the most significant juncture in Wang's whole life, when he underwent a sudden conversion and attained the great illumination in the truth of the "prime conscience." Wang's life since then was nothing but a master's life in endeavoring to realize that truth in his life and to transmit it to his disciples and posterity. A little care should have prevented the translator from mistaking "I have had nothing but" for "I did not discuss." Even apart from the letters, how

could the translator have rendered the passage in question as he has done, since he himself had stated Wang's great life-event in his biography (p. 13), and must have known that most of the writings translated belonged to Wang's later years, after his day at Lung-ch'ang? For example, how could any writer have Christ say: "After I had been baptized in the Jordan I did not preach the Kingdom of God, for I was not able to interpret it"?

In spite of these and other defects and mistakes, the work of translation must have been a long, arduous, and painstaking one. The reviewer appreciates the translator's labor, but would suggest ways in which the work could have been improved and made more useful. These suggestions may be summarized as follows:

1. That a general introduction be added, stating the philosophic system of Wang as a whole and pointing out carefully its specific points, especially with reference to his contentions against the Sung philosophers, as well as to his relation with Buddhism and Taoism.
2. That his biography be rewritten, with a special care for his psychological development, taking materials from his letters instead of from the rather tedious and disconnected accounts made by his disciples, as reproduced in the present volume.
3. That Wang's terminology be thoroughly remodeled and reproduced in accordance with his specific contentions and connotations, and explanatory notes be added, together with the originals as far as possible (perhaps in the index, too), distinguishing them from Chu Hui-an's interpretations.
4. That cross-references be made to passages treating of similar subjects or describing the same events and experiences in the philosopher's life.
5. That most of the figurative expressions and allusions to ancient anecdotes be explained by notes.

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BRIEF MENTION

THACKERAY, H. ST. J. *The Letter of Aristeas*. [Translations of Early Documents, edited by W. O. E. Oesterley and G. H. Box.] London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1917. xx+116 pages. \$1.00.

This new translation of the *Letter of Aristeas* brings another important document from the ancient world within easy reach of modern students. Mr. Thackeray has produced an altogether admirable edition. The introduction tells just those things